

THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

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An exhibition of paintings and watercolors dating from the late 1950s to the present illustrating the interaction of visual perception and subjective experience in the work of three artists -- Milton Avery, Mark Rothko, and Jon Schueler -- opens July 9, 1975 and continues through August 31 at the Cleveland Museum of Art.

Entitled Landscapes, Interior and Exterior: Avery, Rothko, and Schueler, the show consists of 33 works lent from public and private collections in the United States, and in Canada. Concentration is on the work of Schueler, a 59-year-old American painter now living and working on the west coast of Scotland.

The exhibition has been organized by Edward B. Henning, Curator of Modern Art at the Cleveland Museum, who also has prepared the catalogue which accompanies the show.

"Rothko knew, and was influenced by Avery," Mr. Henning says. "And Schueler knew, and was influenced by Rothko. Yet each artist demonstrates a different point of view, and reaction to, the objective experiences of life and nature."

Of the three, Rothko is the most subjective. The most familiar of his mature works, like the monumental Black, Maroons, and White of 1958 which is included in the exhibition, involve no more than three or four soft-edged horizontal rectangles hovering one above the other in weightless suspension -- a visual vocabulary he invented to provide glimpses into his own "inner landscapes."

(more)

2-landscapes, interior and exterior

Avery's repertoire, by contrast, consisted of the everyday setting of his life, and the people who passed through it. From these domestic landscapes he fashioned -- with rich color and highly simplified forms -- lyrical compositions of subtle eloquence, like the painting Sand, Sea and Sky of 1959 which distills the essence of a place and moment in three geometric-shaped planes of color.

"Schueler," Mr. Henning says, "stands between the aesthetic objectivity of Avery and the seductive subjectivity of Rothko. Images that first appear to be abstractions are recognized as landscapes and seascapes. Not that they describe the appearance of a meadow, mountain, clouds, or a beach as a photograph would. Rather, they evoke the subtle and fleeting moods provoked by certain landscapes and atmospheric conditions."

In the watercolor Untitled #164 of 1974, for instance, delicate washes of yellow and grays suggest a thin, watery sun breaking through wispy rain clouds, while nature in more violent motion is brought vividly to life in the painting Snow Cloud and Blue Sky of 1962, with its foreboding reds massed over a low horizon.

Schueler, born in Milwaukee in 1916, did not begin to paint until 1945 when he joined an evening portrait class in Los Angeles.

Between 1947 and 1951 he studied with Clyfford Still at the California School of Fine Arts in San Francisco where he also met Mark Rothko. In the early 1950s he moved to New York where he again met Rothko, and other of the abstract expressionists. At this time he often visited Rothko in his studio, sometimes working with him, more frequently engaging in lively discussions about art.

In recent years he has found the landscape and light he wants to paint in Scotland, and since 1970 has lived at Mallaig, on the country's west coast.

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3-landscapes, interior and exterior

His work previously has been exhibited in galleries in New York and San Francisco, and in 1973 was the subject of an exhibition organized by the Edinburgh College of Art for the Edinburgh Festival. Late this spring he had a one-man show at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York.

Landscapes, Interior and Exterior: Avery, Rothko, and Schueler has been installed in the special exhibition galleries on the Museum's second floor. Admission is free.

Gallery talks on the exhibition will be held at 1:30 p.m. July 23 and July 27. In addition, a course on Avery, Rothko and Schueler will be offered on three Tuesdays at 1:30 p.m. beginning July 29.

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